GUIDE TO THE FN17 NGONDE FILE

[The FN17 Ngonde file covers two closely related Bantu-speaking societies: the Ngonde proper of northern Malawi, and the Nyakyusa of adjacent southwestern Tanzania. The only important difference between the Ngonde and the Nyakyusa is that they are located in different political divisions. Otherwise, they are very similar culturally. The bulk of the material in the file is on the Nyakyusa, studied principally by the husband-wife team of Godfrey and Monica Wilson in the period 1934-1938. The basic sources are 1: Wilson, a study of Nyakyusa age-villages; 2: Wilson, a study of rituals of kinship among the Nyakyusa; 3: Mackenzie, a missionary ethnography of the Ngonde; and 9: Wilson, a study of the relationship of religion to Nyakyusa social structure. Two of the sources (4: Tew and 8: Wilson) are summaries of the entire culture. The other sources are descriptive and analytical studies of special aspects of Ngonde society, particularly that of the Nyakyusa.

The information in this file concerns mostly the social relationships and religious beliefs of the population. Data on economic activities and daily life are also adequately presented. Like many other African peoples, the Ngonde, as a result of European contacts, are undergoing rapid cultural changes. Some of the effects of these changes are recorded in this file. The file was processed between 1957 and 1965.]